

## COMMEMORATING EARTH DAY

EARTH DAY 2009

**HON. RON KIND**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 22, 2009*

Mr. KIND. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 39th annual Earth Day celebration. While our Nation is facing many other important and difficult challenges, I think it is incredibly important that we take this day to reflect on the status of our environment and how each of us affects it individually. Little decisions made in our own daily lives snowball into large changes that have tremendous impact—a fact worth remembering.

Earth Day founder and Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson is the perfect example of just how great an impact one person can have. Born in the small town of Clear Lake in northwest Wisconsin, Sen. Nelson went on to become governor of the state and then U.S. Senator. He founded Earth Day in 1970 to put pressing environmental issues on the national political map. Now, 39 years later, Earth Day is celebrated in 175 countries, helping motivate and mobilize hundreds of millions of people to commit to better environmental practices and policies.

Not all of us can have this same kind of global influence, but Earth Day's message of collective action means that each of us has a role in preserving our world for future generations, one step at a time. For instance, if each of us simply replaces one incandescent light bulb with a compact fluorescent bulb, we would prevent the annual emission of greenhouse gases equal to those of 2 million. We also would save enough electricity to shut down two dirty coal power plants. At the same time, American families would save money, as CFL bulbs use 75 percent less electricity than traditional bulbs—a win-win for the environment and the consumer.

In recent years we have witnessed countless other examples of individuals making decisions that help them go green. For example, Wisconsin leads the nation in anaerobic digesters, which take livestock manure and convert it into biogas that produces clean, renewable energy. Additionally, schools across our state have been able to save on their energy costs and help us meet our carbon management goals by utilizing biomass energy projects. These are just two ways people in my district and my state are doing their part.

On this Earth Day, as I recognize and applaud the actions of countless people around the world, I also challenge each of us to continue our efforts. We must take additional steps to meet our shared environmental challenges and to leave this world a healthy, vibrant, and beautiful place for generations to come.

**HON. DAVID G. REICHERT**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 22, 2009*

Mr. REICHERT. Madam Speaker, almost forty years ago today, what was an idea to spread awareness about our environment has become global recognition and awareness of the importance of protecting the Earth. Earth Day began in 1970, when 20 million people participated across the U.S.

Earth Day has grown into a global tradition, with a billion people expected to take part this year in 180 nations around the world.

It is a movement that succeeds because of the passion of each individual, realizing that there's something bigger than ourselves—that what each of us contribute can make a difference in our world, and on our environment.

In Washington State, we take special pride in our natural resources, and I'm proud to follow in the footsteps of so many in our great State who have worked together to protect the outdoors and our environment.

One of the popular, natural glories of my Congressional district in Washington State is the Alpine Lakes Wilderness, a 362,000 acre wilderness that sits just west of the Seattle metropolitan area. Just over a week ago, I joined the senior Senator from Washington State to discuss our recently introduced legislation to designate over 22,000 acres of additional wilderness and institute federal protection for two pristine rivers in my district. Our new legislation will expand the boundary of the existing Alpine Lakes wilderness area to embrace important lower-elevation lands, and establish Wild and Scenic designations for the Pratt and parts of the Middle Fork Snoqualmie Rivers.

Earth Day brings an excitement to the movement of protecting our environment, but we need to take the Earth Day movement from single-day actions—such as park clean-ups and tree-planting parties—to longterm commitments in our everyday lives. Whether that is supporting legislation, or making small changes to be more environmentally conscious, each is equally important. These commitments will make a difference for our children and the generations to come.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH  
ANNIVERSARY OF CRISISLINK**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 22, 2009*

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, it is my great honor to rise today to recognize an outstanding organization serving Northern Virginia. CrisisLink is a community-based nonprofit dedicated to crisis prevention, intervention, and response. Since its founding in 1969, CrisisLink has evolved to become an invaluable resource to our communities.

Originally founded as a hotline for Arlington teens, CrisisLink was incorporated in February

1970 as the around-the-clock Northern Virginia Hotline. Just ten years ago, the name of the organization was changed to reflect the extended mission and range of services that CrisisLink has continued to provide. CrisisLink now has the ability to refer callers to over 4,400 resources located in Northern Virginia that can help callers address the problems and situations affecting their lives.

CrisisLink is experiencing a huge increase in demand for its services. Over the past twelve months, the volume of suicide-related calls has increased by 60% when compared to the twelve month period immediately prior and increased by 150% when compared to five years ago. CrisisLink's hotlines are staffed for sixteen hours every day by highly trained volunteers. These volunteers contribute over 15,000 hours of service every year. Virginia Hospital Center provides in-kind contributions totaling over \$500,000 each year including providing \$50,000 worth of space for programs.

Although CrisisLink is often noted for its role as a suicide and crisis intervention hotline, it also provides a number of programs that extend its reach throughout the community. CrisisLink added a 2-1-1 number to serve as a central number to help connect those in need with information on community resources and health and human services. The 2-1-1 call volume has increased by 50% since July 2008. Over 30,000 calls to the CrisisLink hotline and the 2-1-1 number will be answered this year alone.

CrisisLink's programs are estimated to save the Greater Washington region over \$4,320,000 in ambulance, police, 9-1-1, hospital, and follow-up costs by preventing suicide attempts throughout the region. This financial savings multiplies as localities are able to apply these saved resources to greater preventative and proactive measures.

The Tara Sirmans Survivor HOPE program was launched in September 2006. The Help and Outreach for Prevention and Education (HOPE) program works with families and loved ones to help them as they struggle with the intense grief experienced following a suicide or other form of sudden and traumatic loss. Through peer support, workshops, and survivor support groups, the HOPE program works to assist families and friends through the most difficult of situations.

In 2008, Washingtonian Magazine recognized CrisisLink as one of the top charities in the Washington region. CrisisLink was also the recipient of the first ever "National Award for Crisis Center Excellence" for its works responding to the September 11th attack on the Pentagon.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the contributions of CrisisLink over its 40 years of existence. CrisisLink saves lives and prevents tragedies. Perhaps someday our society will no longer need services such as CrisisLink, but until that day, we are grateful for their selfless and critical service. I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the dedicated staff and volunteers who are so deserving of our recognition for their commitment to helping those in their time of need.